

Effective Date: Fall 2009

Course Description

Placement/Prerequisite: ACT score (as specified in the Placement section of the catalog) or a grade of “C” or higher in English 1001. The study and practice of rhetorical strategies, critical reading and thinking, culminating in the research paper. A grade of “C” or higher is required to advance to all sophomore English courses.

Course Objectives

1. To interpret various rhetorical situations
2. To practice inquiry and discovery (invention strategies)
3. To examine and practice writing as a way of knowing
4. To analyze and employ elements of argumentation
5. To evaluate library and Internet research sources
6. To incorporate source materials into a formal, documented paper
7. To edit and revise for maximum rhetorical and organizational effect

Procedures to Evaluate these Objectives

1. Informal writing assignments allow student to engage in various rhetorical situations and stage of the writing process, such as inquiry and discovery (invention), writing as a way of knowing, research preparation, paraphrasing, revising and editing.
2. Formal essays and/or other genre discourses, written for a variety of contexts, allow students to apply techniques of argumentation, incorporation of primary and secondary sources, and documentation.
3. A semester minimum of 3000 words or 12 pages of edited prose, including a documented paper of at least 1500 words or 6 pages.

Use of Evaluation Results to Improve the Course

1. Students’ ability to engage in various rhetorical situations in the informal writing assignments will gauge whether instructors should in the future increase the placement, frequency, or type of this type of assignment.
2. Students’ ability to write formal papers in a variety of contexts will determine whether instructors should in the future focus more on argumentation, stylistic incorporation of sources, or the mechanics of documentation.
3. Students’ ability to produce the minimum length requirement will determine whether instructors in the future should increase their length requirement above the minimum for greatest student success in the course.

Sample Topical Outline (1)

1. The Rhetorical Situation
2. Writing as a Way of Knowing
 - a. Journals
 - b. Essays in the traditional sense

3. Argumentation
 - a. Classical appeals to logos, ethos, and pathos
 - b. Modern techniques of claims, warrants, reasons, etc.
4. Short Critical Response Papers
5. Peer Revision and Editing
6. Library Information Literacy Tutorial
7. Annotated Bibliography
8. Documented Paper
 - a. Research Methods
 - b. Reading and Evaluating Primary Sources
 - c. Reading and Evaluating Secondary Sources
 - d. Synthesis and Integration of Source Materials
 - i. Paraphrasing
 - ii. Summarizing
 - iii. Quoting
 - iv. Citing

Sample Topical Outline (2)

Course theme: “Odysseys”

Portfolio Unit A: Writing as Journey toward Knowledge

Focus Texts:

Homer, *Odyssey* (excerpts);

Joel and Ethan Coen, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000, Touchstone Pictures).

1. Writing as a way of knowing
 - a. Reflective writing (journal) activities on personal odysseys or journeys of discovery
 - b. Short literature analysis using close reading of *The Odyssey*
2. Accessing and responding to the rhetorical situation
 - a. One-paragraph summary of *O Brother, Where Art Thou* (film)
 - b. Position paper: critique of film as depiction of modern *Odyssey*

Portfolio Unit B: Reading and Research as Tools for Writing

Focus Text:

Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*

1. Developing information literacy
 - a. Finding and evaluating appropriate primary and secondary sources (interviews, academic periodicals and texts, online sources and databases, etc.)
 - b. Completing the LSUA Library Information Literacy Tutorial
2. Using a process approach to develop a documented research project on a specific aspect of American culture connected to *Huckleberry Finn* (i.e., mid-nineteenth century American literary culture, slavery laws and enforcement, Mississippi River travel and culture, religion, education, the status of widows, orphans, or the impoverished in mid-nineteenth century, small-town America)
 - a. Overview of newspaper or periodical from nineteenth century America (microfilm)

- b. Planning, drafting, revising, and editing a collaborative research project with emphasis on synthesis and integration of source materials (paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting and citing sources)
- c. Collaborative, short presentation of research findings with technology and/or visual components
- d. Researched position paper on thematic issue from *Huckleberry Finn* (min. 1500 words)

Sample Topical Outline (3)

Course theme: “Writing Home – Understanding Identity and Community through Regional Texts”

Portfolio Unit A: Responding to Representations of Region

Focus Text:

Little Altars Everywhere, Rebecca Wells
or *Same Place, Same Things*, Tim Gatreaux

1. Writing as a way of knowing
 - a. Reflective writing (journal) activities from Georgia Heard, *Writing Towards Home*
 - b. Short literature analysis using close reading of primary text
 - c. Observing culture: feature news story on person or cultural event
2. Accessing the rhetorical situation
 - a. One-paragraph plot summary of film which depicts regional culture (i.e., *Sweet Home Alabama*, *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*, *The Waterboy*, *The Pelican Brief*, or *Steel Magnolias*)
 - b. Position paper: critical response to film or literary text as depiction of culture

Portfolio Unit B: Reading and Research as Tools for Writing

Focus Text:

A Lesson before Dying, Ernest Gaines

1. Developing information literacy
 - a. Finding and evaluating appropriate primary and secondary sources (interviews, academic periodicals and texts, online sources and databases, etc.)
 - b. Conducting an oral history of 1940s Louisiana resident, including responsible research practices (permission and release form) and use of information
2. Writing a documented research project on a specific aspect of 1940s Louisiana culture connected to *A Lesson Before Dying* (i.e., education, sharecropping, churches and religion, popular culture and entertainment, the legal system and capital punishment)
 - a. Overview of newspaper from 1940s Louisiana
 - b. Summary and response to oral history of 1940s Louisiana resident
 - e. Planning, drafting, revising, and editing a collaborative research project with emphasis on synthesis and integration of source materials (paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting and citing sources)

- f. Collaborative, short presentation of research findings with technology and/or visual components
- g. Researched position paper on thematic issue from *A Lesson Before Dying* (min. 1500 words)

Sample Topical Outline (4)

- Course theme: “Historical Contexts of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*”
- Overview of the course: Writing tasks which address writing as a way of knowing, writing with varied rhetorical purposes, information literacy, and documentation of sources, and writing as a process.
- Steps in the process:
 1. Comparison of the life of 19th century mill worker with the live of a 19th century slave in Virginia (from handouts)
 2. Summary of resource librarian presentations of research methods and sources available through LSUA Bolton Library regarding life, culture and fashion popular at the time *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was published
 3. Midterm documented research paper based on event or events in the plot of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (min. 1000 words)
 4. Final documented research paper based on event or events in the plot of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (min. 1500 words)